

629. What were your instructions?—No price was mentioned. I was not to offer money exactly for the land. I was merely to put everything I could in the way of Mitchell and Davis; and as far as I could to debar them from getting land. *Mr. J. E. Dalton.*
16th Sept., 1875.

630. Your father states that one of your instructions was "to double any offer made by the Government"?—I think my father must have meant the time before. I do not recollect receiving instructions to that effect the last time.

631. *Hon. Sir D. McLean.*] What were your instructions at this time?—To pick up all I could, and to proceed down to Wellington, and to meet Mr. Brissenden here.

632. *The Chairman.*] Anything else?—And to stop Mitchell and Davis as much as I possibly could.

633. To prevent them acquiring land?—Yes, in the Taupo district.

634. *Mr. Rolleston* asked if Sir Donald McLean would be good enough to inform the Committee when and how long Messrs. Davis and Mitchell had been employed by the Government.

635. *Hon. Sir D. McLean.*] I cannot tell you the exact date. The arrangement with Messrs. Mitchell and Davis was, I fancy, about 1873, but I would not be positive.

636. Was it continued during 1874?—I expect they were in the employ of the Government at that time. They had been employed by companies in purchasing land at Taupo, and they were taken over by the Government. The dates are in the printed returns laid on the table of the House.

637. *Mr. O'Neill*, to the witness Dalton.] Were you aware that Messrs. Davis and Mitchell were purchasing for the Government?—I was under that impression.

638. I think you stated Mr. Brissenden was purchasing some land for a Mr. Holdship?—I do not know whether he was purchasing, but I believe he was in some way connected with it.

639. At the time he was acting for the Government?—Yes, he was.

640. *Hon. Sir D. McLean.*] You have stated that Mr. Percy Smith stopped your survey. I want to know if there was any particular reason for stopping the survey at that time?—I was not authorized by the Government to do that particular survey. Mr. Brissenden authorized me.

641. Are you aware that there was a dispute between two tribes of Natives about that particular block?—I believe there was. That was one of the reasons Mr. Brissenden sent me down to take that particular survey.

642. Mr. Percy Smith is the officer of the Government who looks after these surveys?—Yes.

643. And he instructed you to discontinue the survey?—He did.

644. *The Chairman.*] Your father states that he was present when Mr. Brissenden arranged for you to go to Rotorua?—He was.

645. And a part of your instructions was to prevent the Government getting an acre of land, if possible?—Yes, but this was the first time I went down to Rotorua.

646. But the first time you did not go to oppose Messrs. Davis and Mitchell?—Then I went to prevent the Natives selling the land to anybody.

647. But your father says he was present the second time?—He was not present the second time, because it took place at Ahipara. It only took place the first time.

648. Who employed you the first time to go down and prevent the Natives selling land to the Government?—Mr. Brissenden.

649. About what date was that?—The date of the letter handed in—September, 1873.

650. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Was Mr. Brissenden then in the employ of the Government?—I do not remember the exact date of his employment.

651. *Hon. Sir D. McLean* here informed the Committee that this was before Mr. Brissenden was in the employ of the Government.

652. *Sir G. Grey.*] I see your father goes on to say that he was not present the last time?—He was not.

653. This last time was after Mr. Brissenden had been appointed Land Purchase Commissioner in the North?—It was.

654. Were your instructions, "After effecting your purpose at Rotorua to push overland to Wellington, there to have joined Mr. Brissenden?"—Yes.

655. And you only got as far as Napier, owing to the snow?—I tried to cross Taupo Lake, but the snow was too thick on the hills I had to cross.

656. Did you ever tell your father one of your instructions at that time was to double any offers made by the Government. He says that positively: "I know one of his instructions were to double any offer made by the Government?"—I do not recollect telling my father the last time that one of my instructions was to double any offers made by the Government.

657. You had no such instructions, then?—To the best of my recollection I had not.

658. Would you have done it to stop Mitchell and Davis?—Certainly I should. I should have carried out my instructions.

659. I understand your instructions were to prevent Mitchell and Davis buying land?—Exactly.

660. And with that object you would have offered twice as much as the Government did?—I might have offered it.

661. You stated just now you would?—I would have done it.

662. *Mr. Rolleston.*] Did Mr. Brissenden ever tell you what was his object in opposing Mitchell and Davis?—He did not. He left me to draw my own conclusions.

663. What conclusions did you draw?—That he preferred this to the Northern district.

664. How do you mean?—That he would sooner be stationed at Taupo than in the Northern district to purchase.

665. His object therefore was by this indirect means to get himself transferred?—Yes, that was the conclusion I came to.

666. *Mr. Richmond.*] By the failure of Mitchell and Davis?—Yes.

667. Had you any idea why he preferred the Taupo district to the Northern one?—There was a larger scope of country there.